

We claim:

1. A method comprising:  
receiving, from a customer, a request for a product to be dispensed by a vending machine,  
5 in which the request indicates a first product;  
providing a plurality of selectable menu options, each of which defines at least one  
customer service issue;  
receiving, from the customer, a selection of at least one of the menu options, thereby  
defining an indication of a customer service issue;  
10 determining whether to provide a resolution to the customer service issue; and  
providing, to the customer, an offer for a second product that is not the first product.
2. The method of claim 1, in which providing an offer comprises:  
providing an offer for one of  
15 the second product, and  
a refund.
3. The method of claim 1, in which providing an offer for the second product comprises:  
determining that a sales velocity of the second product is less than a threshold.  
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4. The method of claim 1, in which determining whether to provide a resolution to the  
customer service issue comprises:  
determining whether to provide a resolution to the customer service issue based on sales  
velocity of the second product.  
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5. The method of claim 1, further comprising:  
determining that the first product is unable to be dispensed from the vending machine; and  
disabling the ability to request the first product.

6. A method comprising:  
receiving, from a customer, a request for a product to be dispensed by a vending machine,  
in which the request indicates a first product;  
determining that the vending machine has malfunctioned.
- 5 providing a plurality of selectable menu options, each of which defines at least one  
customer service issue;  
receiving, from the customer, a selection of at least one of the menu options, thereby  
defining an indication of a customer service issue;  
determining that a sales velocity of a second product is less than a threshold; and
- 10 determining whether to provide a resolution to the customer service issue based on the  
sales velocity; and  
providing, to the customer, a compensation code that is redeemable for the second  
product.
- 15 7. A method comprising:  
receiving, from a customer, a request for a product to be dispensed by a vending machine;  
determining that a customer service issue exists;  
determining whether to provide a resolution to the customer service issue; and  
providing a resolution to the customer, in which the resolution includes providing an offer
- 20 for a second product other than a first product indicated by the request.
8. The method of claim 7, in which determining that a customer service issue exists  
comprises:  
receiving, from the customer, an indication of a customer service issue.
- 25 9. The method of claim 8, further comprising:  
providing a plurality of selectable menu options, each of which defines at least one  
customer service issue;  
and in which
- 30 receiving, from the customer, an indication of a customer service issue comprises:  
receiving, from the customer, a selection of at least one of the menu options.

10. The method of claim 9, further comprising:  
determining diagnostic data of the vending machine; and  
determining, based of the diagnostic data, at least one of the plurality of selectable menu options.
- 5 11. The method of claim 7, in which determining that a customer service issue exists comprises:  
determining that the vending machine has malfunctioned.
- 10 12. The method of claim 11, in which  
the request includes  
an indication of a first product to be dispensed, and in which  
determining that the vending machine has malfunctioned comprises:  
determining that the vending machine has failed to dispense the first product.
- 15 13. The method of claim 12, in which  
determining that the vending machine has failed to dispense the first product comprises:  
determining that the vending machine has dispensed a product that is not the first product.
- 20 14. The method of claim 11, in which  
determining that the vending machine has malfunctioned comprises:  
determining that the vending machine has not processed payment correctly.
- 25 15. The method of claim 14, in which  
determining that the vending machine has not processed payment correctly comprises:  
determining that the vending machine has not properly credited payment that is tendered by the customer.
- 30 16. The method of claim 14, in which  
determining that the vending machine has not processed payment correctly comprises:  
determining that the vending machine has not properly dispensed payment that is due to the customer.

17. The method of claim 7, further comprising:  
determining diagnostic data of the vending machine.
- 5 18. The method of claim 17, in which determining diagnostic data of the vending machine  
comprises at least one of:  
assessing data in a database;  
receiving an indication of a customer service issue from a customer;  
generating an image of at least a portion of the vending machine; and  
10 receiving data from a sensor that is operable to sense a condition of the vending machine.
19. The method of claim 7, in which providing a resolution to the vending machine customer  
comprises at least one of:  
providing to the customer a product other than a product indicated by the request;  
15 providing the customer with money via the vending machine;  
establishing a credit balance of the vending machine;  
applying credit toward a customer account of the customer;  
providing a compensation code to the customer;  
providing to the customer a voucher that is redeemable for a benefit from the vending  
20 machine;  
providing to the customer a voucher that is redeemable for a benefit from another vending  
machine; and  
providing to the customer a voucher that is redeemable for a product from a retail store.
- 25 20. The method of claim 7, in which providing an offer for a second product other than a first  
product indicated by the request comprises:  
providing an offer for one of  
the second product other than the first product indicated by the request, and  
30 a refund.
21. The method of claim 7, in which providing an offer for a second product other than a first  
product indicated by the request comprises:  
determining that a sales velocity of the second product is less than a threshold; and  
providing an offer for the second product.
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22. The method of claim 7, in which determining whether to provide a resolution to the customer service issue comprises:  
determining whether to provide a resolution to the customer service issue based on coin inventory.
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23. The method of claim 7, in which determining whether to provide a resolution to the customer service issue comprises:  
determining whether to provide a resolution to the customer service issue based on sales velocity of a product.
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24. The method of claim 7, further comprising:  
determining that a third product is unable to be dispensed from the vending machine; and  
disabling the ability of a customer to request the third product.
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25. The method of claim 7, further comprising:  
recording data associated with the customer service issue; and  
determining a unique identifier for the customer service issue.
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26. The method of claim 25, further comprising:  
determining a resolution based on the recorded data; and  
communicating an indication of the determined to the customer.
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27. The method of claim 25, further comprising:  
receiving information which identifies the customer.
28. The method of claim 25, further comprising:  
outputting, to the customer, the unique identifier.
29. The method of claim 25, in which outputting, to the customer, the unique identifier comprises:  
displaying an alphanumeric code.
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30. The method of claim 7, in which recording data associated with the customer service issue comprises:

determining diagnostic data of the vending machine;  
recording the diagnostic data.

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